Defence cooperation agreement

347. SHRI RAMDAS AGARWAL: Will the PRIME MINISTER be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that Russia had put forward a triangular defence cooperation agreement between India, China and Russia for permanent peace in the region;

(b) if so, the details thereof; and

(c) what is the reaction of Government of India and also Government of China?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF DEFENCE (SHRI MALLIKARJUN): (a) No proposal from the Government of Russia has been received by the Government of India. This subject was not also discussed at the official level during the recent visit of the Russian Federal Assembly delegation.

(b) and (c) Do not arise.

Strength of India contingent in UN operations in Somalia

348. SHRI VIREN J. SHAH: Will the PRIME MINISTER be pleased to state:

(a) what are the details of strength of the Indian contingent (rank-wise) which is serving the ongoing United Nations operations in Somalia;

(b) how many of our Army personnel have lost their lives and injured during these operations and what are their names and designations;

(c) what are the details of the compensation and other benefits granted by the United Nations to the bereaved families and to those who have been injured; and

(d) what financial and other benefits have been granted to these families/injured persons by Government of India?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF DEFENCE (SHRI MALLIKARJUN): (a) 219 Officers, 277 JCOs and 4493. Other Ranks are deployed in UN peace Keeping operations in Somalia.

(b) Since the time of deployment of the Indian troops on UN Peace Keeping Missions in Somalia, 14 of their personnel have been killed and 36 injured. It will not be desirable to disclose the names and designations of the deceased/injured personnel.

(c) and (d) For the troop contingent including Staff Officers deployed in UN Peace Keeping operations, as per UN Regulations, in cases of death, injury or illness attributable to service, UN reimburses payments made by Governments based upon their National Legislations and/of Regulations. As per Government orders, death, injury or illness during this Peace Keeping operations will be treated as battle casualties and be covered for liberalised pensionary awards. Apart from the pensionary benefits, the families would also be entitled to death benefit from Army Group Insurance if the deceased was covered. Sometimes grants are also given from Army Wives Welfare Association Fund; Disabled Army Personnel, Widow and Orphans Fund and Army Officers Benevolent Fund on the merit of the case.

Bird hits at IAF service airfields

349. SHRI KRISHNA KUMAR BIRLA: Will the PRIME MINISTER be pleased to state:

(a) whether any study has been made to identify the IAF service airfields as prone to bird strikes;

(b) if so, what are the details thereof stating the estimated loss suffered by the IAF annually due to bird hits; and

(c) what strategy has been formulated by Government to check the incidents of bird hits at the IAF service airfields?